

Federal Highway Administration, DOT

§ 771.107

771.133 Compliance with other requirements.

771.135 Section 4(f) (49 U.S.C. 303).

771.137 International actions.

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*; 23 U.S.C. 109, 110, 128, 138 and 315; 49 U.S.C. 303(c), 5301(e), 5323, and 5324; 40 CFR part 1500 *et seq.*; 49 CFR 1.48(b) and 1.51.

SOURCE: 52 FR 32660, Aug. 28, 1987, unless otherwise noted.

§ 771.101 Purpose.

This regulation prescribes the policies and procedures of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as amended (NEPA), and the regulation of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), 40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508. This regulation sets forth all FHWA, FTA, and Department of Transportation (DOT) requirements under NEPA for the processing of highway and mass transportation projects. This regulation also sets forth procedures to comply with 23 U.S.C. 109(h), 128, 138, and 49 U.S.C. 303, 5301(e), 5323(b), and 5324(b).

[52 FR 32660, Aug. 28, 1987, as amended at 70 FR 24469, May 9, 2005]

§ 771.103 [Reserved]

§ 771.105 Policy.

It is the policy of the Administration that:

(a) To the fullest extent possible, all environmental investigations, reviews, and consultations be coordinated as a single process, and compliance with all applicable environmental requirements be reflected in the environmental document required by this regulation.¹

(b) Alternative courses of action be evaluated and decisions be made in the best overall public interest based upon

¹FHWA and FTA have supplementary guidance on the format and content of NEPA documents for their programs. This includes a list of various environmental laws, regulations, and Executive orders which may be applicable to projects. The FHWA Technical Advisory T6640.8A, October 30, 1987, and the FTA supplementary guidance are available from the respective FHWA and FTA headquarters and field offices as prescribed in 49 CFR part 7.

a balanced consideration of the need for safe and efficient transportation; of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the proposed transportation improvement; and of national, State, and local environmental protection goals.

(c) Public involvement and a systematic interdisciplinary approach be essential parts of the development process for proposed actions.

(d) Measures necessary to mitigate adverse impacts be incorporated into the action. Measures necessary to mitigate adverse impacts are eligible for Federal funding when the Administration determines that:

(1) The impacts for which the mitigation is proposed actually result from the Administration action; and

(2) The proposed mitigation represents a reasonable public expenditure after considering the impacts of the action and the benefits of the proposed mitigation measures. In making this determination, the Administration will consider, among other factors, the extent to which the proposed measures would assist in complying with a Federal statute, Executive Order, or Administration regulation or policy.

(e) Costs incurred by the applicant for the preparation of environmental documents requested by the Administration be eligible for Federal assistance.

(f) No person, because of handicap, age, race, color, sex, or national origin, be excluded from participating in, or denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any Administration program or procedural activity required by or developed pursuant to this regulation.

[52 FR 32660, Aug. 28, 1987; 53 FR 11065, Apr. 5, 1988, as amended at 70 FR 24469, May 9, 2005]

§ 771.107 Definitions.

The definitions contained in the CEQ regulation and in Titles 23 and 49 of the United States Code are applicable. In addition, the following definitions apply.

(a) *Environmental studies.* The investigations of potential environmental impacts to determine the environmental process to be followed and to

assist in the preparation of the environmental document.

(b) *Action.* A highway or transit project proposed for FHWA or FTA funding. It also includes activities such as joint and multiple use permits, changes in access control, etc., which may or may not involve a commitment of Federal funds.

(c) *Administration action.* The approval by FHWA or FTA of the applicant's request for Federal funds for construction. It also includes approval of activities such as joint and multiple use permits, changes in access control, etc., which may or may not involve a commitment of Federal funds.

(d) *Administration.* FHWA or FTA, whichever is the designated lead agency for the proposed action.

(e) *Section 4(f).* Refers to 49 U.S.C. 303 and 23 U.S.C. 138.²

[52 FR 32660, Aug. 28, 1987, as amended at 70 FR 24469, May 9, 2005]

§ 771.109 Applicability and responsibilities.

(a)(1) The provisions of this regulation and the CEQ regulation apply to actions where the Administration exercises sufficient control to condition the permit or project approval. Actions taken by the applicant which do not require Federal approvals, such as preparation of a regional transportation plan are not subject to this regulation.

(2) This regulation does not apply to, or alter approvals by the Administration made prior to the effective date of this regulation.

(3) Environmental documents accepted or prepared by the Administration after the effective date of this regulation shall be developed in accordance with this regulation.

(b) It shall be the responsibility of the applicant, in cooperation with the Administration to implement those

mitigation measures stated as commitments in the environmental documents prepared pursuant to this regulation. The FHWA will assure that this is accomplished as a part of its program management responsibilities that include reviews of designs, plans, specifications, and estimates (PS&E), and construction inspections. The FTA will assure implementation of committed mitigation measures through incorporation by reference in the grant agreement, followed by reviews of designs and construction inspections.

(c) The Administration, in cooperation with the applicant, has the responsibility to manage the preparation of the appropriate environmental document. The role of the applicant will be determined by the Administration accordance with the CEQ regulation:

(1) *Statewide agency.* If the applicant is a public agency that has statewide jurisdiction (for example, a State highway agency or a State department of transportation) or is a local unit of government acting through a statewide agency, and meets the requirements of section 102(2)(D) of NEPA, the applicant may prepare the environmental impact statement (EIS) and other environmental documents with the Administration furnishing guidance, participating in the preparation, and independently evaluating the document. All FHWA applicants qualify under this paragraph.

(2) *Joint lead agency.* If the applicant is a public agency and is subject to State or local requirements comparable to NEPA, then the Administration and the applicant may prepare the EIS and other environmental documents as joint lead agencies. The applicant shall initially develop substantive portions of the environmental document, although the Administration will be responsible for its scope and content.

(3) *Cooperating agency.* Local public agencies with special expertise in the proposed action may be cooperating agencies in the preparation of an environmental document. An applicant for capital assistance under the Federal transit laws (49 U.S.C. Chapter 53) is presumed to be a cooperating agency if the conditions in paragraph (1) or (2) of this section do not apply. During

²Section 4(f), which protected certain public lands and all historic sites, technically was repealed in 1983 when it was codified, without substantive change, as 49 U.S.C. 303. This regulation continues to refer to section 4(f) because it would create needless confusion to do otherwise; the policies section 4(f) engendered are widely referred to as "section 4(f)" matters. A provision with the same meaning is found at 23 U.S.C. 138 and applies only to FHWA actions.